

## Message Text

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15

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02  
COME-00 /068 W

----- 025461

R 061240Z DEC 76

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4261

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

COMIDEASTFOR

NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI

CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 1011

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ET

SUBJECT: KEBELE ELECTIONS HELD WITH NEITHER FANFARE NOR ENTHUSIASM

REF: ASMARA 0981 (DTG 270600Z NOV 76)

1. THE ACTUAL BALLOTING FOR THE 15 KEBELE REPRESENTATIVES WAS HELD ON DEC 3, WHICH WAS DECLARED A HOLIDAY FOR THE OCCASION. VOTERS IN ASMARA DUTIFULLY CAST THEIR BALLOTS AT THE SINGLE POLLING PLACE IN EACH OF THE 107 KEBELES IN THE CITY. THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS REPORTED DURING THE DAY. THE ELECTIONS WERE MARRED, HOWEVER, BY EXTREMELY POOR ORGANIZATION OF THE VOTING PROCESS, RESULTING IN PROTRACTED DELAYS.

2. THE TYPICAL BALLOTING PROCESS AS REPORTED FROM ONE KEBELE IS SAID TO HAVE PREVAILED IN ALL KEBELES. THE VOTERS WERE ADMITTED INTO THE POLLING PLACE ONE AT A TIME AND GIVEN A PERFORATED SHEET OF 15 BLANK COLORED SQUARES. THE SQUARES WERE THEN SEPARATED AND  
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INSERTED ON 15 OF 40 ENVELOPES TACKED BELOW THE PHOTOGRAPH AND

NAME OF THE CANDIDATES WHICH WERE LINED ALONG THE WALL. WITHOUT  
CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS OR AN OVERRIDING CONCERN IN THE OUTCOME,  
MOST VOTERS STUFFED THEIR BALLOTS IN THE FIRST 15 ENVELOPES WHICH  
PRESENTED THEMSELVES IN THE LINE OF 40. LOCAL CYNICS ASSERT THAT  
THE KEBELE ELECTORAL OFFICIALS ANTICIPATED THIS REACTION TO THE  
PROCESS AND PLACED THEIR FAVORITE CANDIDATES IN THE FIRST 15  
POSITIONS. ALTHOUGH EXERCISE OF THE FRANCHISE WAS REQUIRED BY  
LAW, THE VOTING PROCESS WAS SO SLOW THAT MANY WHO GATHERED AT THE  
POLLING PLACES WERE UNABLE TO VOTE BEFORE CURFEW.  
SLUTZ

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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